

Frequently Asked Questions

Amendment 9 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Shrimp Fishery of the South Atlantic Region (Amendment 9)

March 2013

What actions are contained in Amendment 9?

- Streamline the process for a South Atlantic state to request a simultaneous closure of federal waters to penaeid shrimp fishing when state waters close. The closure would protect shrimp from directed fishing pressure during cold weather events.
- Add a temperature threshold that could be used for states to request closures of federal waters to shrimp harvest during cold weather events, in lieu of, or in addition to, the current 80% or greater reduction in white shrimp abundance criterion.
- Update the biological reference point that helps determine whether pink shrimp are undergoing overfishing or are overfished.

Why does the closure process need to be streamlined?

- The current process for a state to request a closure of federal waters to protect overwintering white shrimp is a lengthy multi-step process.
- The South Atlantic Fishery management Council (Council) is concerned this long process may hinder protections for shrimp affected by cold weather because of the length of time it takes to implement a closure of federal waters to shrimp harvest when needed.
- To remedy this problem, Amendment 9 would allow a state to request a closure of federal waters to shrimp harvest via a letter to the Regional Administrator containing the scientific data that would show a closure threshold had been reached.
- Streamlining this process may accelerate recovery of the stocks, which increases summer and fall production by protecting the few remaining spawners that survive a freeze.

What is the temperature threshold states may use to request a closure of federal waters to shrimp fishing?

- The Council has chosen to add a 9°C (48°F) temperature threshold criterion to the current 80% reduction in white shrimp stock abundance threshold to request concurrent closure of federal waters when state waters are closed to penaeid shrimp fishing.

When can I comment on the actions in Amendment 9?

- The public may comment on Amendment 9 from March 3, 2013, until May 3, 2013.
- You may submit comments by the following methods:
 - Electronic Submission: The Federal e-Rulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov> (select “Submit Comment”, then type in “NOAA-NMFS-2012-0227” in the “Keyword or ID” box). All comments received are part of the public record and will generally be posted to <http://www.regulations.gov> without change.
 - Mail: NOAA Fisheries
Southeast Regional Office
Sustainable Fisheries Division
c/o Kate Michie
263 13th Avenue South
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701

Where can I get more information in Amendment 9?

- Amendment 9 is available online at The NOAA Fisheries Web site <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sf/SAShrimpHomepage.htm>, or at the Council’s Web site at <http://www.safmc.net>.
- The contact person for Amendment 9 is Kate Michie of NOAA Fisheries Office of Sustainable Fisheries. She may be reached at: (727) 824-5305, or by e-mail at Kate.Michie@noaa.gov.